

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

RCIA: a process which can help every Catholic | PAGE 6

Cardinal Dolan leads prayer at the Inauguration | PAGE 11

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 71, Number 37

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

FEB. 1 2017

## Jubilant crowd in D.C. for march

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Tens of thousands of pro-lifers filled the grounds near the Washington Monument and marched up Constitution Avenue to the U.S. Supreme Court Jan. 27 as both a protest of legalized abortion and a celebration of successful pro-life

efforts across the country.

In years past, the March for Life - which takes place on or near Jan. 22 to mark the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton that legalized abortion virtually on demand - has been almost a battle cry

for the uphill and constant fight faced by those in the pro-life movement hoping for more abortion restrictions and ultimately an end to abortion.

This year's March for Life, under mostly sunny skies and 40-degree temperatures,

was decidedly more upbeat, in part because one of the first speakers was Vice President Mike Pence: the first time a vice president attended the rally.

Other speakers include Kellyanne Conway, special advisor to President Trump.

FULL STORY, PAGE 10

## Faith, knowledge and service

Bishop LaValley writes about the importance of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Ogdensburg in his Follow Me column this week.

"Catholic education can't always change the world, but it can form the mind, soul, and body so that our youth may enter the world with confidence in God and with the desire to do His will," the bishop said.

St. Joseph Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, superintendent of schools, also shares reflections for Catholic Schools Week, writing about what makes Catholic schools different from public schools.

FULL STORIES, PAGES 3, 4

## Plattsburgh March for Life

Scenes from the day and reflections on the importance of making efforts to end abortion

FULL STORIES, PAGES 9 & 16

## IT'S CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

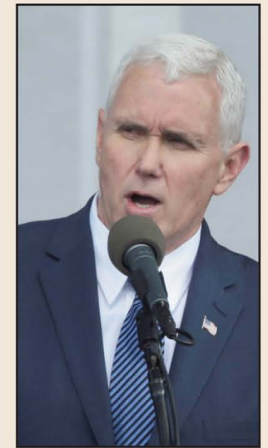


PHOTO BY PAT HENDRICK

Marcia Bugbee, a teacher at St. Agnes School in Lake Placid, provides a lesson on the Beatitudes. Aurora Brunner and Rebecca Hess can be seen facing the camera. St. Agnes is unique among Catholic schools in the diocese since it only serves children in grades pre-K through 3 and offers a year round program. Father John Yonkovic, pastor of St. Agnes parish and, with Catherine Bemis, principal of the school, is pleased with the success of the school of 110 children, noting how "easy it is to capture the religious imagination of a three-year-old." See page 5 for more photos from St. Agnes.

## 'LIFE IS WINNING'

The VP at the MFL



CNS PHOTO/YURI GRIPAS, REUTERS

"Life is winning in America, and today is a celebration of that progress," Vice President Mike Pence, told the March for Life rally on the National Mall Jan. 27. "More than 240 years ago, our founders declared these truths to be self-evident — that we are, all of us, endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," he said. "Forty-four years ago, our Supreme Court turned away from the first of these timeless ideals, but today, generations hence — because of all of you and the many thousands who stand with us in rallies across this country — life is winning again in America."

POPE BENEDICT: Theological life of a pope in his own words... p. 13

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

# Hooray for our Catholic schools!

Like everyone else, I always enjoy Father Muench's columns but, this week, his words brought back some poignant memories.

In honor of Catholic Schools Week, Father Muench writes about the Catholic school system in our diocese, looking back at the time when there were 11 Catholic high schools in the North Country.

Like many of you, I vividly remember those days.

While "my" school - St. Mary's Academy in Ogdensburg - closed just before our class would have entered, we junior

high kids shared the same school spirit as our elders.

Our hearts soared when the Purple Eagles showed everyone how basketball should be played.

Our hearts broke when we heard our beloved SMA would close.

Nearly 50 years later, the healing is not yet complete. I still hear occasional sorrowful references about the shutting of those doors. The loss was

that profound.

**Mary Lou  
Kilian**

As with every Catholic community, we recognized the value of a Catholic school in forming faithful, educated, service-minded citizens.

Closing a Catholic school is never a decision taken lightly.

That's why take time each year to celebrate the schools that we have and show how much we value their presence in our diocese.

With the unwavering support

of our bishop and the talents of diocesan and school administrators and teachers, we can claim a school system that truly makes a difference in our part of the world.

This week - with pancakes, parties and days of appreciation - we are reminded that these schools are gifts to be cherished. Our efforts to insure they remain healthy institutions of "faith, knowledge and service" are worth every penny, every volunteer minute and every word of encouragement.

Happy Catholic Schools Week!

## FATHER MUENCH SAYS

## Blessed are... Catholic schools, etc.

Today I would like to begin by paying my tribute to our Catholic school system here in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. We should be very proud of our Catholic elementary schools and our two Catholic high school. Their faculties and administrators are exceptional.

Our diocese has a long and proud history of many Catholic High Schools. Although today we have only two, I remember the days when we did have many.

I remember one year - ages ago - when I was teaching at Immaculate Heart Central in Watertown. The superintendent of our Catholic schools was Father Bill LaValley and he asked me to direct the Diocesan Basketball Tournament at Clarkson College. With 11 eleven schools represented, it was quite a sensational tournament with rather large crowds attending.

Those were very memorable days.

Many communities in our diocese are blessed with a Catholic Elementary School. I know only too well how well prepared these students are

and all they do when they enter the local public school. Now about other things.

**Rev. William G.  
Muench**

Today I would like to consider with you something about this year's Gospels. This year, which is the A year of the Gospel cycle for Mass, follows St. Matthew's Gospel. We begin these Gospels with the Sermon on the Mount which opens with the Beatitudes.

We should begin each religion class with the Beatitudes which give us a terrific foundation for the message of Jesus.

Let me add that on a trip to Israel, our guide took us to a glorious hillside where tradition says Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount. It was a perfect place to teach a large group. That day on our trip I certainly got an image of what that day must have been like in Jesus' time.

Today let me share with you some of my own thoughts about some of these statements that we call the Beatitudes. They are so perfect and rather countercultural. In this way Jesus teaches us the way to true happiness since, as you may remember, the word

"blessed" means happy.

So here is my take on the Beatitudes.

- Blessed are the poor in Spirit: The world seems to say to us that to be happy we need lots of possessions while Jesus points out to us that possessions can become very addictive. They can make us selfish, even greedy. Jesus teaches us that we will find happiness when we depend less on the stuff of this world. My lesson in understanding the happiness of poverty came from my friends at Madonna House. The questions for us are: What do I really need? How can I deal with my possessions and help others? Jesus teaches us that happiness can be ours when you don't allow possessions to get between ourselves and our God.

- Blessed are those who mourn: Jesus wept at the death of his friend, Lazarus; humanly speaking he understood who we are. We seek help, personal help, when we face the times of sadness - the loss of a loved one, the failings in our own life. We must not be afraid to honestly allow ourselves to mourn so that we can move on and discover a new life, accepting and finding the challenges to put life back together and start anew.

- Blessed are the meek. The world seems to tell us that only the powerful will find happiness. When Jesus came among us, he lived and suffered with meekness and ignorance. We find more power and understanding through his meekness. Jesus teaches us that we will discover more peace when acting through innocence and humility rather than boldness. I am certain that you have discovered this quality of Jesus in prayer, a quality that brings us to the happiness that Jesus wants to teach us.

- Blessed are the merciful. Jesus came to show us the value and importance of acting with mercy and forgiveness. This will always bring peace and happiness. Forgiveness for many is difficult, almost impossible, yet we can do it because we are followers of Jesus and because we are good people. Peace will always come when we discover the power of forgiveness. Being a merciful person transforms us.

Through it we discover the happiness that Jesus brings us.

- Finally, blessed are the peace makers. Peacemakers are not weak rather, with Jesus, peacemakers are children of God. Jesus urges us to be people of peace - and bring love and happiness to our world.



Fourth grade students at Seton Academy grow in faith by praying. Graziella Turco, Thane Shalton, Constance Raut and Matthew Macner follow Christ's example by praying for the needs of all the people they have promised to remember in prayer.



Fifth graders at Augustinian Academy in Garthage, Hailyn Cammack and Logan Sadler, work on a project under the guidance of social studies teacher Kim Schexnayder

FOLLOW ME

# Faith, knowledge, service

By Bishop Terry R. LaValley

Sunday, January 29th, marks the beginning of National Catholic Schools Week. Catholic education can't always change the world, but it can form the mind, soul, and body so that our youth may enter the world with confidence in God and with the desire to do His will.

These days, confidence in the Lord sometimes seems in short supply. Jesus Christ is a stranger to many of our sons and daughters. It's hard to have trust and confidence in Someone we don't know.

It's difficult to muster any motivation to do God's will when we are bombarded with media messages that insist we satisfy all our personal desires and enjoy instant gratification.

Last year, in one of my

school visits, I asked a group of first-graders if there was anything new that they learned since the first day of school, anything that they didn't know before. I thought they might say that they learned how to spell new words or how to add.

To my surprise, one young student said that he learned about Jesus. He said that he didn't know anything about God until he started going to his Catholic school. The young student told me that he never prayed before. This little first-grader said that he doesn't feel so lonely now that he can talk to Jesus. What a precious moment it was for me as bishop. "It makes me feel lonely not knowing God" – the words of a six-year old child.

*It is lonely not knowing God.*

Our hearts are always longing for something

more, or rather, for Someone more. In every human heart, there is an empty chamber waiting for a guest. Many people today, young and not-so-young, suffer loneliness.

Some of us spend a lifetime trying to fill that empty space with self-destructive enticements such as drugs, alcohol, sexual promiscuity or a glut of material things.

Our Catholic schools provide an environment where Jesus Christ is a welcome guest, no stranger. Once a relationship with Jesus is developed, we come to understand that doing God's will serves us and our world immeasurably better than insisting on doing only what satisfies our personal wants.

Again, the Catholic school provides a setting where Christian values are taught and where God's will is the focus of decisions we make.

This year's theme:

*Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service*, reminds us that this environment is created and sustained in the context of community.

Pope Francis wrote that "Catholic schools play a vital role in assisting parents in their duty to raise their children and are encouraged in their mission to help pupils grow into mature adults who can view the world with the love of Jesus and who can understand life as a call to serve God..." (*The Joy of Love*, #279)

Christian communities are called to offer support to the educational mission of families.

To foster an integral education, we need to renew the covenant between the family and the Christian community. To know God, to do His will is a family affair. As we continue to

strengthen faith formation in our families, we become active partners in the transformation of our society, instilling Christian hope, not fear for tomorrow.

Catholic schools are places that generate hope for tomorrow because Jesus, our Hope is welcome within their walls.

We thank parents who choose to send their children to our Catholic schools, as well as pastors and parishioners who work diligently and sacrifice much to provide a Catholic school education in our parishes.

We are grateful to our teachers, staff, and principals who provide an education that combines Catholic faith and teaching with academic excellence.

Thank you for helping to give our children confidence in God and a desire to do God's will.

*The Diocese of Ogdensburg celebrates Catholic Schools Week Jan. 29-Feb. 4*

# Catholic schools: what is the difference?

By Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, SSI  
Superintendent of Schools

Every year the last Sunday in January marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week. This annual celebration began in 1974. The first national Catholic Schools Week theme was *Difference Where It Counts – Message, Community, Service*.

Subsequent themes in the years that followed emphasized the same three components. This year's theme is *Catholic Schools Communities of Faith, Knowledge, Service*.

Our Catholic schools offer quality academic programs but quality academic programs are available in public schools as well.

Our schools' programs address the whole person but more and more public schools address the whole person, most notably their emphasis on character education, ethical behavior and social responsibility.

Our Catholic schools are close knit communities where a safe, orderly, and secure environment support student learning. Many of the public school districts in

which our schools are located are relatively small. They offer the same benefits.

**Catholic schools are communities of faith, extensions of the first and essential community of the family and the extended family of the parish.**

Service through participation in activities and projects which reach out to others is a hallmark of Catholic schools. Public schools do the same.

So, how are Catholic schools different? What is the difference?

Perhaps you are familiar with a phrase we hear during the Christmas holidays, *Jesus is the Reason for the Season*. Well, Jesus is the reason for our Catholic schools too. It is His message that they proclaim. They are communities founded on faith in Jesus and His message. Service is an imperative because Jesus told us to reach out to others especially the most vul-

nerable among us and reminded us that our eternal destiny depends on seeing His face in others.

Our Catholic schools see education as a process which forms the whole person in terms of eternal life.

The specific purpose of Catholic education is the formation of students who, animated by the Gospel, will be good citizens of this world and of the world to come.

It is neither for this life only that God created us, nor for this life only that our students require an outstanding education.

Our students have been created to enjoy one day the beauty and joy of eternal happiness. This is the supernatural vision offered in a Catholic school.

The eternal destiny of our students is accompanied by a profound respect for their dignity as human persons, made in the image and likeness of God and called to life in Christ.

Catholic schools have their foundation in Christ. The words and deeds of Jesus are central to a school's program and environment. Christ is not an af-

terthought or an add-on to the foundational principles of a Catholic school. His words and deeds are the living memory imparted to the students. He is the one who gives meaning to human life.

The human person does not develop in isolation from others. Every person has been created as a social being whose fulfillment is achieved in relationship with God and with others. Thus, community is an essential component in a person's development.

Catholic schools are communities of faith, extensions of the first and essential community of the family and the extended family of the parish. In the school community of faith, the student experiences relationships based on the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. These experiences foster good habits or virtues that instill, maintain and cultivate an environment in which the social nature of the human person can develop and flourish.

Every academic institution imparts values - ideals for which a student is prepared to pursue and eventually

achieve. The ideal that provides the foundation for our Catholic schools is a person, Jesus Christ.

From Him students discover a supernatural vision of life, the full dignity of the human person and the importance of community. Christ is the reason for our Catholic schools. He is the one who makes our Catholic schools unique. T

he difference in a Catholic school is not found in "what makes the difference" but rather in "who makes the difference." Christ is the difference that defines who we are and why we exist. He is the one who leads our students to a bright future in this world and eventually in eternal life.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the parents who have chosen a Catholic school for their children. I realize that in many instances this choice brings with it a financial sacrifice. This sacrifice, however, is an investment in your child's future that will result in benefits for your child, the Church and society.

Likewise, I want to thank the administrators and teachers in our Catholic schools. I am most appreciative for their commitment to our Catholic schools.

The Second Vatican Council said it so well. "... let teachers recognize that the Catholic school depends upon them almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and programs" (*Decree on Catholic Education, #8*). There is a supernatural calling and not simply the exercise of a profession.

"The nobility of the task to which teachers are called demands that, in imitation of Christ, the only Teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every gesture of their behavior. (*The Catholic School, #43*)

We are indeed blessed to have administrators and teachers who are willing to assume this noble task.



**The Seton Schools**  
Discover the Difference

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A Week for 20 Weeks!

All drawings will be held on "Twenty Week Tuesday" February 21, 2017 to July 4, 2017.

**You are eligible for EVERY draw.** You do not have to be present to win. You will be entered into the drawing immediately upon the receipt of this form and a **\$20 check made payable to Seton Catholic.**

You may enter at anytime during the drawing. Please attach all information below for additional entries.

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Superintendent of Schools  
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Ogdensburg, NY 13669

IT'S CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

# ST. AGNES SCHOOL

A day of fun and learning at Catholic school in Lake Placid



PHOTOS BY PAT HENDRICK

Hooray it's gym time at St. Agnes! Miriam Marshall and Gunner Web run towards the camera while, in back, Connor LaHart, Olivia Brown and Sydnee Goddeau wait their turn.



Teacher Andrea Tapia works with Isabella Ehlert on an art project.



Catherine Bemis shares the responsibility of principal of St. Agnes School with Father John Yonkovic, pastor.



The older students at St. Agnes work at their desks. Pictured, back to the camera and then clockwise are Sophie Spanburg, Mia D'Arco, Ellie Morgan and Griffiin McComber.



Estelle Walden and Joseph Carlson learn about shapes

# RCIA: a process for all

By Julia LaShomb

Pastoral Associate, Sacred Heart/St. Lawrence, Massena, and member of the diocesan catechumenate committee

By writing in the *North Country Catholic* about RCIA (the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) you might think we are preaching to the choir. We need to use a language that is understandable to those that have not been educated in the Church. Pope Francis asks us to reach out to the lost Sheep (the strays).

Inquiry is part of that process. It's all about questioning, seeking. Where are you in your faith life? What do you believe? Do you experience a sense of spirituality? What is your sin? What are your expectations of God and your church community? These are questions we should all be asking of ourselves.

The Rite of Election is scheduled for March 5 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg. Does your parish have Catechumens (un-baptized) joining the church? Do you have Candidates to be fully initiated into the church by receiving Confirmation and Holy Communion?

Let's widen the question. Does your parish have any non-active Catholics who have been away from the church and would like to get re-acquainted? What about the adult Catholic who would like to learn more about the church and mature in their faith.

The Catechumenate process is an opportunity for all of the above. It answers many of the questions asked about Sacraments, the Mass, Christian Social Teaching and Moral Theology. It is an opportunity to interact on all

levels. Why keep it closed to the few being initiated during the Easter Vigil? We all need the extra boost of a prayerful life and receiving the Sacraments regularly to build on a living relationship with Christ.

There definitely is a need for the RCIA process as part of our call to evangelize. As practicing Catholics there is a need to have an ongoing process of conversion to promote a loving and forgiving culture. We can only do this after first experiencing the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ for ourselves. Only then are we able to truly evangelize... going out to share the Gospel.

Ask your pastor about RCIA. Join a session even if it has been going on for awhile and see what it is all about. This can be one of the most energizing times in your spiritual life.

## Funeral held for Sr. Marie Gabrielle Demars, DHS

WINDHAM, CONN. – A Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Marie Gabrielle Demars, 95, a member of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit, was held Jan. 18 at the Holy Spirit Provincial House Chapel.

She died Jan. 14 at St. Joseph Living Center in Windham, where she had been a resident since July, 2016. Burial was in St. Mary Cemetery in Putnam.

A native of Tupper Lake, she was born Dora Gladys Demars Oct. 10, 1921, the daughter of the late Thomas and Mary (LePage) Demars,

Sister Marie Gabrielle entered religious life in 1938 and made her religious profession at the Holy Spirit Provincial House in Putnam, Connecticut, July 1, 1943.

She earned a B.A. from Diocesan Sisters' College in Putnam, followed by an M.A. from Boston College and a Ph.D. from Fordham University in New York.

She had a long and varied teaching career in Connecticut and Alabama.

In 1990, Sister Marie Gabrielle went to Nigeria and served as school principal in

one of her order's schools in Ogbomosho until her return to the USA in 1995.

At that point she resided at Bethany Community in Hartford, Connecticut, and volunteered her services at Trust House there. She retired at the Holy Spirit Provincial House in November, 2004. She moved to Holy Spirit Health Care Center in 2007 and then to St. Joseph Living Center in Windham.

She is survived by her sisters in community, the Consecrated Seculars and the Associates as well as nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews in New York and Florida.

### Bishop's Schedule

**Feb. 1** – 9:45 a.m., Episcopal Council Meeting at the Bishop's Residence in Ogdensburg

**Feb. 3** – 8:30 a.m., Closing Mass for Catholic Schools Week at Holy Family Church in Watertown

7 p.m., Canon Law Class for Deacon Candidates at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

### Announcement

The hospital chaplaincy at Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital in Plattsburgh now a full-time position with both Father Eduardo Pesigan and Father William Reamer serving as half-time chaplains in addition to their parish assignments at St. Peter's and Our Lady of Victory respectively.

### Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God's Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required in order to participate. Participants may pre-register at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) by selecting the registration button and following the directions. Further information is available from Atone-ment Sister Ellen Donahue, 315-393-2920, ext. 1440. Upcoming sessions: **Feb. 2** – 5:30 p.m., Holy Family School, Malone **Feb. 8** – 5:30 p.m., St. Mary's School, Canton

### To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact **Victims Assistance Coordinator**, Terrianne Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, PO Box 2446, Plattsburgh, NY, 12901; e-mail: [terriannyanulavich@yahoo.com](mailto:terriannyanulavich@yahoo.com) Phone: 518-483-3261; or Father James Seymour, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy at 315-393-2920, ext. 1340

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### Environmental Stewardship

#### Lessons Learned

During a recent radio interview, the host asked a composer where the idea for a musical composition came from and the composer, calling himself agnostic, spoke of Genesis and creation.

He said he could picture the words of the beginning of the Bible where it describes a formless void with God looking out over all that is covered with water.

From that moment in time, God gave us everything and called it good.

Can we say the same when we look out over the waters today?

"Indeed, the earth, which is our common home, cries out to us in pain because we have hurt her by how we've used and abused her. We have grown to believe that we're the lords and masters of everything and can plunder the earth however we wish." (Laudato Si' (2))

Beginning with water, we must recognize that it is life giving, a sacred resource to be cared for, cherished and share with all. Without water there is no life. God has entrusted this gift to us! Each one of us must show our care.

This week you are invited to reflect on how you show your care.

By A Concerned Christian

### Rest in Peace

*This week marks the anniversary of the deaths of the following clergymen who have served in the Diocese of Ogdensburg*

**Feb. 1** – Rev. John B. Doonan, 1949; Msgr. George T. Donnelly, 1968; Rev. Edward M. Delaney, 1977; Rev. Robert L. Cotter, 2015

**Feb. 2** – Rev. William Bennett, O.M.I., 1887; Rev. Amadeus Viger, O.S.A., 1915; Rev. George E. Racette, 1961


**Feb. 4** – Rev. Joseph Redington, 1892; Rev. Edmund Walsh, 1925; Msgr. Michael R. Burns, 1932; Rev. Alexander Klauder, 1935; Rev. Henry McArdle, O.S.A., 1969; Rev. Francis Maurus Kearns, 1990

**Feb. 5** – Msgr. Thomas E. Walsh, 1901; Msgr. F. Gordon Coseo, 1997; Rev. John J. Fallon, 2005

**Feb. 6** – Msgr. Gerard Gefell, 2009

Visit our website  
[www.northcountrycatholic.org](http://www.northcountrycatholic.org)

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# Catholic Schools Week

## January 29 - February 4

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### **Gouverneur**

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[principal@stjamesk-6.org](mailto:principal@stjamesk-6.org)

### **Lake Placid**

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### **Malone**

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[lgilbert@thesetonschools.org](mailto:lgilbert@thesetonschools.org)

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[principal@stbernardsschool.org](mailto:principal@stbernardsschool.org)

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[annette.connolly@ihschools.org](mailto:annette.connolly@ihschools.org)

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## ON THE MARCH FOR LIFE IN PLATTSBURGH



PHOTOS BY COLLEEN MINER

The Champlain Valley Right to Life sponsored its annual March for Life in Plattsburgh Jan. 22 with pro-lifers marching from the Newman Center to St. John the Baptist Church. Among for marchers were Gilbert LaRose of St. Joseph's in Dannemora and Father John M. Demo, pastor in Dannemora. The event marked the 44th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in the United States.



Dale Barr, regional coordinator of Eastern Ontario Silent No More Awareness Campaign, was the guest speaker as the marchers gathered at St. John's Church. She is shown, above left, walking with Deacon Jack Lukasiewicz, president of the Champlain Valley Right to Life, sponsors of the March for Life. Mrs. Barr, a wife, mother and nurse from Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, is pictured at right speaking at the church. She is a Rachel's Vineyard retreat facilitator and has given her witness on Parliament hill after the Ottawa March for Life and on the steps of Supreme Court after the Washington, D.C. March for Life. She also served as one of the guest speakers for the Youth Buses for Life for this year's March for Life in Washington.



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*March for Life: both a protest of abortion and a celebration of successful pro-life efforts*

# Jubilant crowd gathers in Washington

By Carol Zimmermann  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Tens of thousands of pro-lifers filled the grounds near the Washington Monument and marched up Constitution Avenue to the U.S. Supreme Court Jan. 27 as both a protest of legalized abortion and a celebration of successful pro-life efforts across the country.

In years past, the March for Life - which takes place on or near Jan. 22 to mark the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decisions in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* that legalized abortion virtually on demand - has been almost a battle cry for the uphill and constant fight faced by those in the pro-life movement hoping for more abortion restrictions and ultimately an end to abortion.

This year's March for Life, under mostly sunny skies and 40-degree temperatures, was decidedly more upbeat, in part because one of the first speakers was Vice President Mike Pence: the first time a vice president attended the rally.

Pence, who has marched at the event before as a participant and addressed it as a congressman, repeatedly told the crowd - huddled together in winter coats and hats in front of the stage - that "life is winning" and assured them the Trump administration was behind them.

Kellyanne Conway, special adviser to Trump, and the first on the speakers' list to address the group - holding aloft placards but none of the usual giant banners, which were banned for security reasons -- similarly got plenty of cheers when she said: "This is a new day, a new dawn for life."

The scheduled presence of the vice president, only announced the day before, required the rally perimeter to be fenced in and the crowd



PHOTO BY COLLEEN MINER

Four priests of the Diocese of Ogdensburg were among the tens of thousands of pro-lifers who took part in the annual March for Life in Washington D.C. Jan. 27. From left, Father Bryan Stitt traveled with a group of young adults from the North Country while, Fathers Mark Reilly, Joseph Giroux and Thomas Higman served as chaplains on the Youth Buses for Life carrying 106 teenagers and their chaperones to the march. Full coverage of diocesan participation in the March for Life will be featured in upcoming issues of the *North Country Catholic*.

to enter through long lines that had formed at security checks. Participants seemed unfazed by the required wait, taking it in stride with the day. Some pulled out their pre-packed lunches and started eating, others prayed the rosary. These marchers are used to plenty of hardships from weather conditions alone at the annual march.

Jeanne Mancini, president of March for Life, noted that the group has been marching in all types of bad weather over the years. She also pointed out that amid recent discussion about crowd size at events in Washington, it was hard to measure the number of people that day or for the total who have come

out for the annual march over the past four decades. "The only number we care about is the 58 million" lost to abortion since it was legalized, she said.

As in years past, the crowd was primarily young, with a lot of high school and college-age groups. It was something the speakers took note of, saying this generation would not only keep the pro-life movement going but bring about changes.

Mary Ann Vann, a retiree who made the trip from Trussville, Alabama, for her sixth march, said the most exciting thing for her each time she has taken part is seeing the young people.

Vann, a parishioner at Holy Infant of Prague Parish in

Trussville, said she hoped the energy at the march could be channeled into everyday support for the pro-life movement, something she is involved with on a regular basis with sidewalk counseling, volunteering at crisis pregnancy centers and helping young mothers with basic needs.

She also said she is disheartened by hearing those who say pro-lifers are only concerned about babies because she and her fellow volunteers not only bring pregnant women to their doctor's appointments but also help pay their medical costs.

Jim Klarsch, a member of St. Clement Parish in St. Louis, who came with a bus-

load of eighth-graders, also is involved with pro-life work with the Knights of Columbus at his parish. In Washington on his second march, he said the experience was "empowering."

Standing alongside Constitution Avenue waiting for the march to begin, he said the crowd, which was already filling the street to each side and behind him as far as the eye could see, reinforced his feeling that "this is not just a day but a lifelong mission."

"You're part of a pilgrimage. You take that experience home and you live it," he added.

Some noted that the march had a distinctly different tone than the Women's March on Washington six days before. Two sisters who stood on the sidelines with some of the few handmade signs at the march, described themselves as feminists and said they found the pro-life march more positive and less angry.

"This is a message of love," said Bridget Donofrio, from Washington, holding aloft a poster-board sign with words written with a black marker: "Respect all women born and unborn."

Many of the march signs were pre-made placards with messages such as "I am pro abundant life" or "Defund Planned Parenthood" and "I am the pro-life generation."

The city of Washington, fresh from the inauguration crowd and the women's march held the next day, seemed prepared for this march.

On the Metro, when two older women asked a young woman for directions and pointed to the group with signs that they wanted to join, the woman looked up from her phone and asked if there was a protest today.

"It's the March for Life," one woman said. A few seconds later she added: "It's not a protest; it's more of a celebration."

# CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

## Bishop Vasquez: Trump moves will 'tear families apart'

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration criticized President Donald Trump's executive memorandum to construct a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, saying it would "put immigrant lives needlessly in harm's way." Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration, also criticized Trump's memorandum on a surge in immigrant detention and deportation forces, saying it would "tear families apart and spark fear and panic in communities." Trump signed the two executive memorandums on national security Jan. 25 during a visit to the Department of Homeland Security. Earlier, White House press secretary Sean Spicer said the wall, a cornerstone of Trump's election campaign, would "stem the flow of drugs, crime and illegal immigration" along the southern border. He also said Trump's top priority was the nation's security. But hours later, Bishop Vasquez issued a statement saying that construction of the wall would "make migrants, especially vulnerable women and children, more susceptible to traffickers and smugglers. Additionally, the construction of such a wall destabilizes the many vibrant and beautifully interconnected communities that live peacefully along the border. "Instead of building walls, at this time, my brother bishops and I will continue to follow the example of Pope Francis. We will 'look to build bridges between people, bridges that allow us to break down the walls of exclusion and exploitation."

## CRS president: Denying entry to refugees won't make U.S. safer

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- While U.S. elected officials have an obligation to protect the security of Americans, denying entry to desperate refugees will not make the country safer, said the president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services. Sean Callahan, head of CRS, said, "Welcoming those in need is part of America's DNA. CRS welcomes measures that will make our country safer, but (such measures) shouldn't jeopardize the safety of those fleeing violence (and) should not add appreciable delay nor entail unjust discrimination," he said in a statement released Jan. 26. Callahan was anticipating a presidential memorandum on national security, which President Donald Trump signed Jan. 27. The memorandum calls for suspension of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days. The suspension would allow officials at the state and homeland security departments to review the application and decision-making process and determine the need for additional procedures to ensure that refugees approved for admission do not pose a threat to the U.S. Once the refugee admissions process resumes, refugee claims would be reviewed and those fleeing religious persecution would be prioritized as long as they fled a nation where their religion is in the minority.

## CARDINAL PRAYS AT THE INAUGURATION



CNS PHOTO/CARLOS BARRIA, REUTERS

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan delivers the invocation before U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's swearing-in as the country's 45th president at the U.S. Capitol in Washington. The invocation follows: God of our ancestors and Lord of mercy, you who have made all things and in your providence have charged us to rule the creatures produced by you, to govern the world in holiness and righteousness, and to render judgment with integrity of heart: Give us Wisdom, for we are your servants, weak and short-lived and lacking in comprehension of judgment and of laws. Indeed, though one be perfect among mortals, if Wisdom, which comes from you, be lacking, we count for nothing. Now with you is Wisdom, who knows your will and was there when you made the world; Who understands what is pleasing in your eyes and what is conformable with your commands. Send her forth from your holy heavens from your glorious throne dispatch her that she may be with us and work with us, that we may grasp what is pleasing to you. For she knows and understands all things, and will guide us prudently in our affairs and safeguard us by her glory. Amen.

## Bishop: Catholic schools should promote their selling points

By Carol Zimmermann  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - Catholic schools should face the challenge of enrollment decline by actively promoting what they do best: their high academic achievement and their role in forming leaders, said Bishop George V. Murry of Youngstown, Ohio.

"It's important to do very good public relations," said the bishop, who is chair of the Committee on Catholic Education of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and chair of the board of directors of the National Catholic Educational Association.

He has stressed this urgency in meetings around the country with educators and he highlighted many Catholic school accomplishments in a Jan. 19 interview with Catholic News Service.

He said Catholic schools continue to score higher in national assessment tests and Catholic high schools have a 99 percent graduation rate.

He also said there is plenty of data showing that Catholic schools outperform their public school counterparts on test scores and academics.

But the bishop also knows the sobering statistics on Catholic school closings and enrollment decline.

Figures released by the NCEA show 1,648 Catholic school closings or consolidations from 2005-2015 with 336 school openings and during that time period the number of students declined by almost 20 percent.

The growing decrease in Catholic school enrollment - which Bishop Murry attributes to shifting demographics, tuition costs and changes

in faith practice - is something he thinks should be faced head on.

Last fall, in a keynote address at the NCEA Catholic Leadership Summit in Indianapolis, he told diocesan leaders that the overall national enrollment decline of Catholic schools is a responsibility for everyone to take up: "the entire church and society at large."

"Catholic schools are a gift to the nation and need us all to work together for their growth, both through local action in our particular schools and at the national level across the country," Bishop Murry said.

"And there is much that we, as professional educators, teachers, principals, staff, superintendents, pastors and bishops, can do and indeed are doing to grow enrollment in our Catholic schools," he added.

## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

# A time to be 'light in the darkness'

Much of the world is in extraordinary darkness. In our own country, we are confused and somewhat frightened over both old and new divisions.

The new populism that seems to be the tone for the next four years invites us to turn inwards on ourselves like the dog in the manger, rather than outward as a beacon for the nations.

All of this is added on to the moral relativism, violence, materialism and poverty that confronts us daily.

All this is so contrary to the plan of our Creator. It

challenges even the staunchest believer in God's benevolence, mercy, and the command to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

How different is the teaching of Christ on the mountaintop as He unveiled the actions and attitudes that God considered the way to total happiness.

We know them as the Beatitudes.

In the first reading from Isaiah this Sunday, the Israelites returning from years of captivity and starting all over again are told that the key to pleasing God are acts of justice to

the poor and forgotten.

In the responsorial psalm, we are told that the just person will be a light in darkness.

And in the Gospel, Jesus summons his disciples to be what they are supposed to be in every age and in every place - salt of the earth and light in the darkness.

Salt was used to preserve food and to bring out its flavor. If it lost its power, it should be thrown out.

We all know people who were once fervent in their faith and energetic in sharing it who now have lost their enthusiasm, or abandoned it altogether.

As usual, Jesus uses great images and stories to underline his point of teaching.

FEB. 5

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Isaiah 58:7-10

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Matthew 5:13-16



Monsignor

Paul E.

Whitmore

we allow God's light to shine in and through us, people will look up and see not ourselves, but only Jesus. Mother Teresa had that effect on people.

How do we become full of God's light?

She would tell us that it comes from extended prayer and reflection every day. And when we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, console those who mourn, confront lies with the truth, avoid malicious gossip, our lives will truly reflect God's life-giving light.

If we place our light under a basket, it will eventually suffocate and die. And God's wisdom we were meant to share in guiding our nation will die with it.

And light...we all know people who just light up a room when they enter. We say they radiate light. Where there is light, people can come to the truth.

When they have truth, they realize that love of neighbor is God's command, and we will be judged on how well we loved others.

Cardinal Newman, in his great prayer "Radiating Christ", tells us that when

## A VOICE OF FAITH

## Accepting the unique invitation God has for me

By Andrew Lauria  
Contributing writer

I am beginning to accept my life for what it really is; crazy shifts and subtle mysteries wrapped into one big adventure.

I happen to be quite adventurous and as time goes on, I am discovering that God speaks to me and acts in my life in ways that correspond to my personality. He doesn't expect me to function like anything other than this person that he created me to be and he doesn't refuse to help me because of the quirks of my unique hard-wiring.

He speaks to all of us in as many ways as we are different. For example, if you are quiet natured and methodic in your dealings in life, than it would seem that your relationship with God is one of gentle digesting of quiet words.

If you are extremely extroverted and driven, than there is a good chance that God will work primarily through other people to quote literally inform you of his will.

God guides us according to our own, unique personality.

When I speak of God guiding us, I don't mean that He has a predetermined list of tasks that must be completed in a particular order. When I hear God calling me, He is trying to help me navigate the reality of my own circumstances and to move in the ways that are best for my personal human development and my salvation.

We are free and God wants us to exercise our

ability to choose, in total freedom, the goodness that lies before us every day and in every situation.

**I have learned to see the hand of God working in my life every day and I believe that learning to trust him more is the lesson he is teaching me.**

We can think of it like this: God is always inviting us to the party but we are worried about what to wear, who will be there, or what type of gift we should bring. But these things aren't important; God just wants us to accept the invitation. He'll worry about the rest.

I say this in confidence because God has never, ever left me disappointed or in some way let me down. And I have never responded to God's invitation just to be abandoned to my own devices.

I have been invited to many different places, hav-

ing lived and worked all over the country, to be with many different types of people, and at times have been quite confused as to the purpose of it all. But my needs have always been met and I have been given a seemingly endless supply of great people to accompany me along the way.

Even in the worst of circumstances when it looked like things couldn't get much worse, I was accompanied by a faith God who loves me.

And while my future still looks uncertain, I can say that, looking back, my past is beginning to reveal a lesson. I can see that my varying life experiences have clarified reality for me in a way that I never thought possible.

I have learned to see the hand of God working in my life every day and I believe that learning to trust him more is the lesson he is teaching me.

With this understanding

of the personal, invitational call of God to trust him, I can then understand my life as a very positive movement closer to God and his will, if seemingly chaotic and incongruent from an outside perspective.

My life ultimately makes sense only when I see it through the lens of God's invitation.

And like most people, I am not satisfied with where I am at right now. There is a constant attraction to see more, to achieve greater, to constantly feed my ambition, to develop in many different human ways that don't actually have anything to do with responding to God's invitation.

And I have to stop, pray, receive the Sacraments, and listen more closely to the wisdom of those who love me, and refocus my eyes on what matters most.

And when I am ready to move again, there, waiting in my future, is yet another invitation.



## AT THE MOVIES

# A DOG'S PURPOSE

By John Mulderig  
Catholic News Service

While cats are said to be blessed with nine lives, the clever canine at the center of "A Dog's Purpose" (Universal) - voiced by Josh Gad - guides us through his adventures over four eventful lifetimes.

Repeatedly reincarnated, he (and, for one stint, she) returns in the guise of various breeds and encounters a range of human caregivers.

Although the non-scriptural concept of recurring earthly existences is kept strictly confined to the world of animals, the New Age-style philosophizing the four-legged protagonist engages in along the way may strike some viewers as a bore. That's offset, though, by his droll, dog's-eye view of the world.

During the first of his visits to the planet, as a golden retriever, he's rescued from a dangerous situation and adopted by 8-year-old Ethan Montgomery (Bryce Gheisar). Ethan's sympathetic --but unnamed--mom (Juliet Rylance) welcomes this addition to the household, and helps convince his reluctant (and equally nameless) dad, played by Luke Kirby, to accept the pooch, whom Ethan dubs Bailey.

Bailey becomes Ethan's inseparable companion as the lad grows into a high school football star (KJ Apa) and finds true love with Hannah (Britt Robertson), a girl he meets at a fair.

Ethan's bright prospects are further burnished by winning a college athletic scholarship. But his father's worsening alcoholism casts a pall over his life - and eventually threatens his future.

While his bond with Ethan proves the most enduring of his relationships with humans, during other intervals Bailey first serves as a police dog called Ellie and later becomes a Corgi named Tino. Ellie does her best to comfort her lonely trainer, widowed Chicago police officer Carlos (John Ortiz), and Tino helps to liven up the stagnant social life of his companion, pining single gal Maya (Kirby Howell-Baptiste).

Pet lovers will revel in director Lasse Hallstrom's slight but charming screen version of W. Bruce Cameron's best-selling 2010 novel. And parents will be pleased to find the movie free of any genuinely objectionable elements - albeit one brief scene may, or may not, imply that Maya and her boyfriend, Al (Pooch Hall), are living together.

Grown guardians also will



CNS PHOTO/UNIVERSAL

Dennis Quaid stars in a scene with a dog named "Buddy" in the movie "A Dog's Purpose."

want to note that some sequences are too potentially frightening for the smallest pups.

Those inclined to be cynical may balk at bucolic scenes vaguely reminiscent of a TV ad for hay fever medicine. Still, a good-hearted romantic wrap-up matching characters played

by Dennis Quaid and Peggy Lipton succeeds in keeping things cuddly for all but the most jaundiced.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested.

## BETWEEN THE BOOKENDS

## Journey through the theological life of a pope

By Brian Welter  
Catholic News Service

Peter Seewald's interview of Pope Benedict, which follows from previous interviews and works including "Salt of the Earth," offers readers a journey through the theological life of the retired pope.

This includes thoughts on significant individuals such as Jesuit Father Karl Rahner, Father Hans Kung and St. John Paul II.

The first part of the book highlights a world radically

different from our own, that of Bavarian Catholicism in the mid-20th century. Its piety centered on family, village and Christ.

Joseph Ratzinger stepped out of this world into the seminary and then higher theological studies in Munich. He relished this world.

Though the Nazi and immediate postwar eras brought deep change, the pontiff explains how the faith endured: "Despite the intrusiveness -- where the atmosphere of war was still somehow in the air -- there was a joy that we were now together. The being with one another, the encountering each other, the companionship, was subsequently something deeply moving for me in my consciousness" Such words also convey the sense of connection

that people enjoyed back then, with a shared sense of place and belief.

Progressivism comes up many times in the book regarding his pre-Second Vatican Council, conciliar, and postconciliar experiences. Pope Benedict never denies his progressiveness. He notes that "progressive" meant something different from the Kung perspective, something that always remained faithful to the deposit of the faith.

The interview also highlights philosophy's key role in the pontiff's spiritual and theological journey, including the importance of ancient Greek philosophy and its symbiotic relationship with theology, but extending to later thinkers such as Pascal. As at many points in the book, the pontiff here

conveys the harmonious whole of the Catholic faith.

"Last Testament" includes many of the pope's thoughts on the nature of the church. He ties this in with the office of the papacy: "I, too, always wanted the local churches to be active in and of themselves, and not so dependent on extra help from Rome. So the strengthening of the local church is something very important" Words such as these portray a much softer and more flexible person than the one portrayed in the media or by certain theologians.

Though he says that he never pursued power, he met and worked with the most powerful Catholic thinkers and leaders of the past 60 years. He calls Swiss theologian Father Hans Urs

von Balthasar and French Jesuit Father Henri de Lubac his favorite theologians, recalls working with Father Rahner at Vatican II, and teaching with noted philosopher Josef Pieper at Munster, Germany.

The pope's serenity clearly comes from trusting in God. His answers never convey defensiveness, even concerning Vatileaks or the abuse scandals. Benedict is humble, as when he acknowledges Father von Balthasar's intellectual superiority.

Regarding the present, he expresses great confidence in Pope Francis. Above all, Benedict's critics will be surprised at his open-mindedness, which is the openness of someone who is confidently anchored in his beliefs and carries no secrets.

### About the book

"Last Testament: In His Own Words"  
by Pope Benedict XVI with Peter Seewald. Bloomsbury Continuum (London, 2016). 257 pp., \$24.

## ADIRONDACK

## SPAGHETTI DINNER

**Saranac Lake** – Catholic Daughters Court St. Bernard #787 and Knights of Columbus Council #599 Saranac Lake will sponsor a fundraising dinner.

**Date:** Feb. 4

**Time:** 4 p.m. to 7

**Place:** St. Bernard's School

**Cost:** Adults, \$10; Children under 8, Free

## CLINTON

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

**West Chazy** – St. Joseph's Men's Club will host a pancake breakfast.

**Date:** Feb. 9

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. to Noon

**Place:** Parish Center

**Cost:** Adults, \$8.50; Children 6-10, \$3; under 5, Free

## CDA TEA PARTY

**Peru** – Tea Party to be held to honor women serving in WWII sponsored by the CDA Court St. Monica #2598.

**Date:** Feb. 12

**Time:** 1 p.m. to 4

**Place:** St. Augustine's Church

**Cost:** \$10; 50% of the proceeds will go to the Plattsburgh Honor Flight.

**Contact:** Jane Woods 518-834-5324 or Janice at 518-643-2435 ext. 101

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

**Treadwell Mills** – St. Alexander and St. Joseph to hold pancake breakfasts.

**Dates:** Feb. 5, March 5, April 2 and 23

**Time:** 8 a.m. to Noon

**Place:** St. Joseph's Hall

**Cost:** Adults, \$7; kids, \$3; under 5, Free

## HAMILTON-HERKIMER

## DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

**Old Forge** – Discerning men are invited to consider the call to the priesthood.

**Dates:** Feb 5&19; March 5&26; April 9 and 23; May 7 & 21

**Time:** 3 p.m.

**Place:** St. Bartholomew's Rectory

**Features:** Reflection, Vespers & dinner. Juniors in high school and older.

**Contact:** Fr. Howard Venette, pastor.stbarts@roadrunner.com/ 315-369-3554;

## JEFFERSON

## FAMILY BALL

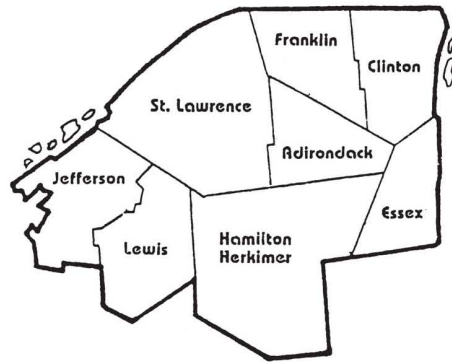
**Watertown** – IHC to host their 3rd Annual Family Ball.

**Date:** Feb. 4

**Time:** 6 p.m. to 9

**Place:** IHC High School

**Cost:** \$25 for Adult and Child; \$10 each additional Child, \$15 each additional



The North Country Catholic welcomes contributions to "Around the Diocese."

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,  
Ogdensburg, NY 13669; fax, 1-866-314-7296;  
e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

Items must be received in the NCC office by the Thursday before publication.

adult; \$50 Family ticket (2 adults and children from family)

**Features:** Semi Formal attire required.

All IHC families and Staff grades Pre-K thru 12 grade welcome.

## SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALL DINNER

**Evans Mills** – Spaghetti and Meatball dinner to be held and benefit the Indian River Knights of Columbus.

**Date:** Feb. 4

**Time:** 4 p.m. to 7

**Place:** St. Mary's Parish Center

## LIFERIGHT MEETING

**Watertown** – Liferight of Watertown meets the first Wednesday of the Month.

**Time:** 1 p.m.

**Place:** 870 Arsenal Street.

**Features:** The office has a variety of pro-life videos, books and educational materials which may be borrowed.

**Contact:** Phone 315-788-8480

## CURSILLO MEETINGS

**Carthage** – The Jefferson/Lewis Cursillo holds its monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of every month.

**Time:** 6 p.m. to 8

**Place:** Community Room of St. James

**Features:** All Cursillistas are encouraged to attend. We also welcome those interested in deepening a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Contact:** Anne Seegebarth  
ams2962@gmail.com, 315-783-4596

## WEEKLY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

**Sackets Harbor** – St. Andrew's has scheduled weekly exposition and Adoration of

the Blessed Sacrament on every Friday.

**Time:** 5 p.m. to 6

## HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

**Watertown** – Holy Hour for vocations

**Date:** Mon.-Fri.

**Time:** 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

**Place:** Holy Family Church

## LEWIS

## DIVINE MERCY

**Houseville** – Divine Mercy Devotions for the month of February to be held.

**Date:** Feb. 5

**Time:** 3 p.m.

**Place:** St. Hedwig's Church

**Features:** Vespers, Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Adoration, The Divine Mercy Chaplet and Benediction.

**Contact:** 348-6260 for information.

## SPAGHETTI DINNER

**Lowville** – St. Peter's Rosary and Altar Society is planning a spaghetti supper.

**Date:** Feb. 2

**Time:** 5 p.m. to 6:30

**Place:** St. Peter's Church

**Cost:** Adults, \$8; ages 5 to 10, \$4; under five free; Take-outs available at 4:30 p.m.; All take-outs - \$8

## EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

**Lowville** – To pray for vocations, all are invited to morning prayer, First Friday Mass, and a Holy Hour with exposition, silent adoration, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and benediction.

**Date:** Feb. 3

**Time:** 11:45 a.m. to 1:30

**Place:** St. Peter's Church

## ST. LAWRENCE

## WINTER RETREAT DAY

**Morristown** – Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSI will lead a retreat day on the theme "Praying With the Psalms."

**Place:** Cedarhaven

**Date:** Feb. 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 with option of overnight for extended retreat

**Suggested offering:** \$25 for day (includes lunch); Additional \$25 for overnight (dinner, breakfast included)

**To register:** Call 315-212-6592 or email

srbethssj@gmail.com by Feb. 1

## K OF C BREAKFAST

**Potsdam** – The Knights of Columbus Council 340 is hosting a community Breakfast.

**Date:** Feb. 5

**Time:** 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Place:** Potsdam Town Hall

**Cost:** \$6; Family of 4, \$20

**Contact:** Grand Knight Colin Myers at colinmyers@gmail.com or (315) 265-6168

## HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

**Massena** – First Friday Devotions set

**Date:** Feb. 3

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. to 7:30

**Place:** St. Mary's Church

## BISHOP BARRON STUDY PROGRAM

**Massena** – Begin the journey from sin to sanctity with Bishop Barron's 9 week study program "Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues".

**Date:** Tues, from February 7 through April 4 (the week before Holy Week)

**Time:** 2 p.m. to 4 and also offered at 6:30 p.m. to 8:30

**Place:** St. Mary's Social Hall

**Cost:** No Charge (though a free will offering will be accepted)

**Contact:** Visit website at www.massenacatholics.com or call the parish Rectory at 315-769-2469.

## EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

**Massena** – St. Mary's & St. Joseph's parish offers a Eucharistic Holy Hour and Benediction.

**Time:** Thursdays, immediately following the 8:15 a.m. Mass until 10 a.m.

**Place:** St. Mary's

## LENTE ADORATION

**Massena** – Lenten Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament to be held.

**Date:** Beginning March 3 every Mon.

and Fri during Lent

**Time:** 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

**Place:** St. Mary's Church family room

## DAYS OF DISCERNMENT

**Potsdam** – Discerning men are invited to come together & consider the call the Roman Catholic Priesthood.

**Dates:** Feb 12; Mar 5;

**Time:** 3 p.m.

**Place:** St. Mary's Rectory

**Features:** Reflection and vespers. No reservation necessary. Open to men who are Juniors in high school and older.

**Contact:** Your Catholic Campus Minister or Father Stephen Rocker, pastorsmsp@gmail.com, 315-265-9680; or Fr. Doug Lucia, frdoug@tcwncy.rr.com

## EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

**Massena** – St. Mary's & St. Joseph's hold Benediction and Adoration every Friday

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 10

**Place:** St. Mary's Family Room

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

## DEACON FORMATION INFORMATION

The Deacon Formation Program for the Diocese of Ogdensburg is offering Informational Sessions for Pastors and all interested parties.

**Schedule:** Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m., Church of the Visitation, Norfolk

March 8, 6:30 p.m., Sister of St. Joseph Motherhouse, Watertown

March 15, 6:30p.m. St. Peter's Church (Emmaus Room), Plattsburgh

**Contact:** to register for a specific session, contact Deacon John White at jwhite@rcdony.org.

## LENTE RETREAT FOR YOUTH

Diocesan Youth Council is hosting a peer led Lenten retreat open to all students in grades 6-12.

**Dates:** March 25 in Malone; March 26 in Canton

**Features:** The event is free, but participants must pre-register and bring a bagged lunch.

**Contact:** Details and registration can be found at www.rcdony.org/lentenretreat

## COLLEGE SPRING RETREAT

**Ogdensburg** – If you are an area college student, please join us for our annual Catholic Campus Ministry Spring Retreat.

**Date:** Feb. 10 – 12

**Place:** Wadhams Hall

**Cost:** \$20, includes meals and lodging

**Features:** Come take a rest from the business of campus for Faith, Fellowship and Formation.

**Contact:** Please contact your local Campus Minister or Amanda Conklin at acorklin@stlawu.edu or 315-386-2543 for more information or to register.



**The Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, Inc.**

**The Society for the Propagation of the Faith**

Sr. Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director  
622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
(315) 393-2920; fax 1-866-314-7296  
mbrett@rcdony.org

# A salute to Catholic schools

This week we are happy to honor the Annual Catholic Schools Week. The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2017 is "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service".

The annual observance starts the last Sunday in January and runs all week. Schools typically celebrate Catholic Schools Week with Masses, open houses and activities for students, families, parishioners and the community at large.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Mission Office is happy to send the students, faculty and administration our best wishes for a successful Catholic Schools Week.

This year's theme, actually also embodies to a great extent what the Missionary Childhood Association, MCA, stands for too. MCA is a program conducted in Catholic schools and catechetical programs to teach students that are here about the Missions over there.

Parents, guardians, parish priests, Religious Brothers and Sisters and lay people, especially teachers and catechists, play a vital role in MCA's mission.

The phrase, "it takes a village" comes to mind when teaching children about children in other countries through MCA programs. When children learn the message of MCA -- that children are and can be missionaries today and are called to share their faith and their love, in prayer and sacrifice, with the poorest of the world's children then they are answering the call of their baptism!

Faith. Knowledge. Service. These three words sum up not only Catholic Schools Week 2017, but they also represent what students should strive for each day. Let us stand together and support our Catholic schools as they prepare our students for a life as young Catholic adults.

It does take a village to raise a child. With Catholic Schools Week, together we can all make sure that the children in our village, both near and far, are ready to animate others to share their faith and to be missionaries themselves by supporting the missionary work of the Church worldwide.

Best wishes to all the students, faculty, schools and staffers for a successful, prayerful and blessed Catholic Schools Week 2017!

Please remember "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith" when writing or changing your Will.  
[www.dioogdensburg.org/missionoffice](http://www.dioogdensburg.org/missionoffice)

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## OBITUARIES

**Colton** – Bernard J. Sullivan, 84; Funeral Services in Spring at St. Patrick's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Lowville** – Dolores R. (Percoski) Koziol, 84; Funeral Services Jan. 27, 2017 at St. Peter's Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

**Massena** – Janet C. (Lamendola) Moniere, 82; Funeral Services Jan. 28, 2017 at St. Mary's Church.

**Morrisonville** – Claire E. (Gonyea) Herron, 100; Funeral Services Jan. 23, 2017 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Church, Dannemora.

**Moria** – Margaret H. (Stumpf) Allison, 90; Funeral Services Jan. 20, 2017 at the Flint Funeral Home.

**Ogdensburg** – Walter "Skip" Welson Bracy, Jr., 72; Funeral Services at St. Mary's Cathedral.

**Peru** – James R. "Jim" Mose, 76; Funeral Services Jan. 24, 2017 at St. Augustine's Church.

**Plattsburgh** – Roy H. Armstrong, 87; Fu-

neral Services Jan. 28, 2017 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

**Plattsburgh** – David S. Garrant, 77; Funeral Services Jan. 27, 2017 at Our Lady of Victory Church.

**Port Henry** – Rose "Girle" (Boyea) O'Dell, 75; Funeral Services Jan. 28, 2017 at St. Patrick's Church.

**Potsdam** – Genevieve LaPointe Miller, 92; Funeral Services Jan. 27, 2017 at the Garner Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Saranac Lake** – Dorothy R. (Evans) Sullivan, 94; Funeral Services Jan. 26, 2017 in Fortune-Keough Funeral Home; burial in Brookside Cemetery.

**Star Lake** – Jesse R. Streeter, 80; Funeral Services Jan. 27, 2017 at St. Hubert's Church; burial in St. Hubert's Cemetery.

**Theresa** – Jane (Martusewicz) Gleason, 73; Funeral Services Jan. 23, 2017 at Frederick Bros. Funeral Home; burial in Oxbow Cemetery.

**Ticonderoga** – Brenda Jean (Noel) Wells, 57; Funeral Services Jan. 23, 2017 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Waddington** – Judith E. (Rookey) Dalton, 68; Funeral Services Jan. 21, 2017 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Brookside Cemetery.

**Watertown** – Philomena Morgia Canale, 90; Funeral Services at St. Anthony's Church.

### GO GREEN!

Receive the NCC in your e-mail every Monday where ever you are in the world.  
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PRAYER SUGGESTION

O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name a priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own dispositions and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul; take over his entire personality and life.

Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always. O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (...) Amen.

Replace him with yourself.

February

The Passion of our Lord

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For more information visit us online at: [www.mrppapostolate.com](http://www.mrppapostolate.com)  
A donation to help support THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS will be appreciated.  
The Monthly Prayer Request for Priests is graciously underwritten by: [www.myvocation.net](http://www.myvocation.net)

## A VOICE OF FAITH

# Thanks to those who honor the gift of life

By Suzanne Pietropaoli  
Staff writer

Recently an acquaintance asked my husband and me if we would be attending the annual March for Life in Washington D.C. on January 27th. This year marks the 44th time that hundreds of thousands of women, men, and children from across the country will board buses and travel to the nation's capital where they will witness to the value of every single human life.

Regrettably, we have aged out of that grueling trip, when we would drive to Plattsburgh to board a bus at 8 p.m. and travel through the night to arrive in the Capitol Hill neighborhood at 6 a.m. the next morning.

A day of prayer, rallies, and speeches was capped by the march: that sea of people overflowing Constitution Avenue from the Washington Monument to the Supreme Court. Then it was back to the buses once more for the return trip.

Though we can no longer manage this 48-hour marathon, we are very grateful to the hundreds of thousands of people (including friends and family members) whose presence there affirms that all human life is precious. After all, "inconvenient," "imperfect,"



PHOTO BY COLLEEN MINER

Although Angelo and Suzanne Pietropaoli of Malone couldn't make the trip to Washington for the annual March for Life, they were among the scores who joined the Champlain Valley Right to Life March held Jan. 22 in Plattsburgh.

"unwanted" are labels attached to the unborn by others.

But labels cannot change the reality that a human person, no matter how small, as Dr. Seuss famously wrote, is still a person: unique, beautiful, full of promise.

Each is a being whose potential will need a lifetime in which to be fully realized; each is a unique and irreplaceable gift that would only keep on giving as the years pass.

But of course, not all babies will have that opportunity. In fact, as of this writing, 59,725,176 babies have been lost in this country to abortion since it was legalized January 22, 1973.

To get a sense of just how many missing persons that is, consider the states of New Jersey, Virginia, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Now imagine them empty, entirely devoid of their current populations.

How could we ever think that such catastrophic losses would not have catastrophic consequences?

That emptiness has effects that reverberate throughout our social and economic systems.

At the personal level, each one of those lost babies was someone's child and grandchild, and very likely would have been another person's sister, brother, friend, spouse. In time, those lost children would have had children and grandchildren of their own. Now that will never be; certain future generations will simply never

exist. Family relationships have been disrupted, and any family that has lost a child to illness or injury knows all too well the hidden hole left by such tragedy.

Then there is the broader social impact. Who were these children? Who might they have become? What might they have done?

Given such staggering numbers, it is certainly reasonable to think that the arts, medicine, education, science, business—and neighborhoods!—would have been enriched and strengthened by the presence and the gifts of so many millions of people.

We cannot begin to know exactly what we have lost, but that does not lessen the effect.

Ironically, it may be easier to gauge the economic impact.

In the immediate, babies not allowed to be born will never be consumers, a serious issue in an economy built on consumerism. Imagine the billions of dollars in economic activity that would have been gener-

ated over their lifetimes: from diapers, formula, and baby furniture; to sneakers, computers, and iPhone; to cars, college educations and new homes. Imagine, too, the financial contribution of nearly 60 million additional taxpayers!

**Forty-four years of abortion on demand have sent the message that people who displease us in some way, or who somehow fail to measure up, can be removed by whatever means we deem necessary**

One of the most significant shifts of all is in the way we see and respond to the weak and vulnerable. Almost 2500 years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle reminded humanity that we become what we repeatedly do. Forty-four years of abortion on demand have sent the message that people who displease us in some way, or who somehow fail to measure up, can be removed by whatever means we deem necessary. Skyrocketing suicide rates, widespread violence, and the steady march of euthanasia reflect a lesson well-learned—that not all life is worth living, that only some lives are worth protecting.

So yes, thanks to those who march, and to everyone everywhere who honors the gift of life in all its fragile beauty. There is a line in the sand here: on one side, life as an incomparable gift, and on the other, life as an intolerable burden.

Mending the tears in our social fabric may well depend on finding our way back to reverencing the human person, the very crown of all creation. After all, as poet Carl Sandburg said so well, "A baby is God's opinion that life should go on."

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